



Seattle Light Rail Review Panel

Comments on...

Capitol Hill Station

Scope Briefing

From the March 24, 1999 meeting:

- Before the baseline is finalized for these tunnel stations, it is very important to review and confirm data about where people are coming from and going to, in that this information should direct the location of entrances.
- The headhouses must be visible, but context is important in determining the actual design. On Capitol Hill one of the issues is orientation— whether station entrances should be perpendicular or parallel to the street.
- The Panel believes the entrance location decisions are critical, and requests that ST come back when those decisions are made— even if that means a special briefing— in order to explain the locations, recommendations for each one, and information that supports the decisions.

From the May 12, 1999 meeting:

- Preserve future options with cut and cover— this allows entrances on both sides of the street to be developed later if they can't be done now; also there are fewer construction unknowns with cut and cover.

From the May 26, 1999 meeting:

- The Panel supports Option B, cut and cover with a mined crossover, because it provides the maximum amount of flexibility for current and future access.
- The Panel recommends that access options be fully explored now, in order to take advantage of the construction period and minimize additional disruption in the future.

Summary of Issues Raised in LRRP Scope Briefing Progress Report (July 1999):

- Providing entrances on both sides of the street, incorporating them into existing/new development
- Minimizing impacts to businesses during/after construction
- Possible partnerships with SCCC, Group Health re: employee shuttle vans, bike facilities
- Cultural connections to Cornish, Volunteer Park Museum
- Need to revisit a 2nd Capitol Hill station at Roy Street!

Concept Design

The Panel was briefed on September 8, 1999; no formal comments made.

Summary of Issues Raised in LRRP Concept Design Progress Report (December 1999):

- Characterization of the north entrance as more active than the south is sound; and resolution of circulation issues is proceeding well as a necessary first step. The Panel also supports open space at John as a forecourt for future development.
- Different art treatments at each entrance is appropriate and should be pursued further. The concept of "piercing" can be implied even if the above and below ground surfaces can't literally be pierced.
- Even though SCCC is a willing development partner for the south entrance, because of funding uncertainties for the LRC it may be better for Sound Transit to forge ahead with a bold design that stands alone and has the ability to be incorporated into the LRC at a future date.

Schematic Design

The Panel was briefed on June 21, 2000 and recommended . approval of the schematic designs as shown, with particular support for:

- The treatment of the below-grade platform area with its stepped vaulted ceiling and asymmetrical layout that helps the passenger distinguish one end of the tunnel from another;
- The prominence of the lantern form for the stationhouse at Howell and Broadway; and
- Development of strong pedestrian connections along Howell Street east and west of Broadway.

The Panel requested further development and refinement of the following issues as the design progresses:

- A stronger, less tentative design of the ribbon of glass above the stairs, to match the strength of the exterior glass envelope;
- Side walls that reflect the same spirit of design shown in the stepped, vaulted ceiling;
- Design guidelines for any future development over the station entrances, highlighting the need to maintain prominence of the "lanterns" and maintain open space for people to gather in;
- Rethinking the marquee for the north entrance, in favor of keeping the lantern design concept as pure and uncluttered as possible so as not to lose the distinguishing characteristics that identify it with Link (vs. inadvertently creating some confusion about whether the entrance is to public transit or a private commercial building);
- Flexibility to create some retail opportunity on the south side of the north entrance, as well as an open space/plaza area for people to gather in; and
- Ensuring that the void inside the lantern offers clear direction to pedestrians as they approach the entrance, and also once inside the entrance

The Panel awaits additional information about the likely consequences of a potential rezone to 65' height limit and its impact on the north station entrance before rendering an opinion. If it can be demonstrated that the rezone is likely to stimulate/accommodate market demand for development that would be supportive of light rail, the Panel would support it and would, furthermore, request that the City and Sound Transit work aggressively to bring a developer into the process now while station design is still underway. If, however, redevelopment above the north station entrance is unlikely under

current or proposed zoning, the Panel would instead recommend redesign of the station entrance to accommodate a small pedestrian plaza and gathering area, bringing the open space to the outside of the site (north side). In other words, without certainty of transit-oriented development above the entrance, the Panel believes the trade-offs including loss of open space and added infrastructure costs are too great.

Design Development

The Panel is tentatively scheduled for a briefing on design development March 7, 2001.

Construction Documents

No briefings scheduled yet.